



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 3: Module 2B:

Performance Task



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Summary of Task

Throughout the module, students have built an understanding of how customs and traditions reflect a country's culture, and have read a Magic Tree House book and accompanying informational texts to gather a rich collection of information. The performance task gives students a chance to share their learning about the culture of the country they have researched. Students will be writing a letter to Mary Pope Osborne, the author of the Magic Tree House books, urging her to write a new book, set in the present day, about the country they have researched. In this informative/explanatory letter, students present their research about the culture of the country and suggest ideas for the plot of the new book. **This task addresses NYSP12 ELA CCLS W.3.2, W.3.4, W.3.5, W.3.7, W.3.8, L.3.1h, L.3.1i, L.3.2f, and L.3.3a.**

Format

A four-paragraph letter

An introductory paragraph (scaffolded writing during Unit 3; first draft of expert country written as on-demand in the Mid-Unit 3 Assessment)

Two body paragraphs (scaffolded writing during Unit 3; first draft of expert country written as on-demand assessment in the Mid-Unit 3 Assessment)

A closing paragraph (scaffolded writing during Unit 3; first draft of expert country written as on-demand assessment in the Mid-Unit 3 Assessment)



Standards Assessed through This Task

- W.3.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
 - a. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.
 - b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
 - c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., *also*, *another*, *and*, *more*, *but*) to connect ideas within categories of information.
 - d. Provide a concluding statement or section.
- W.3.4. With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.
- W.3.5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
- W.3.7. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
- W.3.8. Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.
- L.3.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
 - h. Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.
 - i. Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.
- L.3.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
 - f. Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words.
- L.3.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
 - a. Choose words and phrases for effect.



Student-Friendly Writing Invitation/Task Description

- Author Mary Pope Osborne has announced she will write a new *Magic Tree House* book! Instead of traveling to a place in the past, however, Ms. Osborne has decided that Jack and Annie will return in the present to a country they've already visited. Before she begins writing, Ms. Osborne wants to be sure there are plenty of interesting things about the culture of the country that she can include in her new story.
- You have been invited to conduct this research for her! After conducting research with your small group about your assigned country, you will individually write a letter to the author of the *Magic Tree House* series to inform her about the culture of your country today. This will help her decide whether she should write a new book on this country. Include information about two aspects of culture that you discovered in your *Exploring Countries* text. Use accurate facts, definitions, and details from your research to explain each. At the end of your letter, provide a brief description of how Mary Pope Osborne might use the information you found in a new book on this country. **This task addresses NYSP12 ELA CCLS W.3.2, W.3.4, W.3.5, W.3.7, L.3.1h, L.3.1i, L.3.2f, and L.3.3a.**



Key Criteria for Success (Aligned with NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

Below are key criteria students must address when completing this task. Specific lessons during the module build in opportunities for students to understand the criteria, offer additional criteria, and work with their teacher to construct a rubric on which their work will be critiqued and formally assessed.

Your letter will meet these criteria:

- A clear and inviting introduction that states the topic and purpose for writing
- Demonstrates an understanding of audience
- Includes two informative paragraphs: one detailed paragraph about each aspect of culture chosen
- Has body paragraphs that each contain a clear topic sentence, supporting details and a concluding statement
- Uses accurate facts, definitions, and details from the research to explain each aspect of culture.
- Uses linking words and phrases to connect ideas together
- Provides a conclusion to wrap up the ideas

Options for Students

- Student letters could be accompanied by illustrations. These could be photos or artwork.

Options for Teachers

- Students may type their final letter.
- Students may present their letter to their own class, to other classes in the school, or to parents or other adults.
- Teachers could create a letter-writing contest for the grade level. After students have completed their letters, a panel of teacher judges could choose one letter to send to Mary Pope Osborne as a representative of their school.



Resources and Links

- Visit the *Magic Tree House* books Web site to learn more about the author, Mary Pope Osborne: <http://www.magictreehouse.com/>.

Central Text and Informational Texts

Magic Tree House books

Magic Tree House #37: Dragon of the Red Dawn by Mary Pope Osborne (one per student)

Book Club Book (Students are assigned one book from the following list.)

Magic Tree House #33: Carnival at Candlelight by Mary Pope Osborne (590L)

Magic Tree House #34: Season of the Sandstorms by Mary Pope Osborne (580L)

Magic Tree House #45: A Crazy Day with Cobras by Mary Pope Osborne (570L)

Informational Texts from the Exploring Countries series from Bellwether Publishing

Exploring Countries: Japan by Colleen Sexton (740L) (one per student)

Texts for Research (Students use one book from the following list to conduct research.)

Exploring Countries: Italy by Walter Simmons (840L)

Exploring Countries: India by Jim Bartell (840L)

Exploring Countries: Iraq by Lisa Owings (810L)

“Republic of Iraq” in CultureGrams Kids Edition

“Soccer Mania” by Cynthia Hatch

“The Ancient Art of Rangoli” by Shruti Priya and Katherine Darrow